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THE DOCTRINE OF FREE-GRACE, NO DOCTRINE OF LICENCIOUSNESSE.

OR,

That Gods Free Unconditionall pardoning of Sinne, is the best way to Mortifie the Power of Sinne in Believers.

Asserted and Cleared,

By *Edward Bagshawe* Student of *Ch. Ch.*

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THE DOCTRINE OF FREE-GRACE, AND NO [redacted] LICENTIOUSNESS

OR,

That Gods Free Unconditionall pardoning Love, is the best way to Mortifie the Power of Sinne in Believers.

By Edward Bagshaw Student of Divinity.

LONDON

THE PREFACE.

AMong those many False and Dangerous Opinions, which in this Age are let loose upon us; there is none that is either more Destructive of the True Nature of Christian Religion, or more likely to be imbraced by some seemingly zealous and devout men, than the Doctrine of Free-will: whereby the Grace of God is rendred either altogether Needless, or at best only a Coadjutor and partial Assistant to Mens Salvation.

Were not men Naturally willing to follow that which serves to puff them up, and begets an opinion in them, that they are like Gods: I should wonder how the Opinion of Free-will could ever finde any Learned Assertour; since the Reasons against it, drawn upon a Philosophical account, are such as no Wit of man is able to answer. For the subordination of Causes, and the Necessity that every Effect, should have a Cause, which did produce it, is so strong an Argument, that the Will of man is subject to the enforcing influence of the Causes which move and determine it; that the most Learned of the Heathen, did upon this score altogether reject Free-will; and yet this supposed Fatality in every Action, did not at all lessen or abate their strict adherence to, and prosecution of Virtue: None having been more famous in this kinds than the Stoicks, which were the Known Asserters and Maintainers of Necessity.

But without entring into any such kind of Dispute, the Apostle [illegible] and that We are not so tied up by the Concurrence of Causes, but that a man hath power over his own Will, to embrace or to refuse any thing tendred to him, with or without Reason, as he himself pleases. While I say I am content to admit this, my meaning is not that I understand how this can be done (for I must professe it is to me altogether unintelligible) yet because it contradicts no Article of Faith, and likewise serves best to demonstrate the Equity of Humane Laws, which are all founded upon that supposition; I think it altogether a Needless thing to dispute about Free-will in Moral Actions, and a very Absurd thing to deny it. Since in matters which are capable of Contrary Reasonings to follow the Uncertain and Dark and Universal Affirm of Mankind, is much more Safe and Prudent, than to tread in New paths; there being but little difference, or rather Effect, between an Apparent Error, and a Suspected, because Unnecessary Truth.

But how different soever I am to comply with the Common Prejudice and Inbred Notion of Free-will, as to Humane Actions; yet as to the things of God, I must altogether deny it. For it is so clear, That the Things of God, none can understand, and consequently not Practice, but the Spirit of God, and those, to whom that Spirit reveals them both Plain and Easie, that the Apostle urges those Excuses, not as a Truth then newly discovered to him, but as a Principle founded in Nature, and apparent by its own Equity and Reasonableness: And what the Scriptures every where mention concerning the Actings of the Spirit upon Believers, or, the Experience of all Believers that ever were in the World, is able to evidence; since such must needs confesse, that there can be a more dangerous Enemy to the Truths of God, than the Understanding; nor more Rebellious to the Precepts of God, than the Will of Man; until the Spirit of God hath enlightned the one, and by his own Immediate Works, mightily overpowred the other.

For

For the proof of this, I might content my self with what I find contained in the bare letter of Scripture, to which, if we are what we profesſe, we ought to captivate our own Reaſonings; but ſince many men, and thoſe not of leaſt Note even in our own Church, plead for that Idol Free-will, *from the many Abſurdities which would follow, ſhould it not be granted; I ſhall undertake to demonſtrate, that much more pernicious Conſequences will follow, ſhould it once be admitted. For*

Firſt, It totally deſtroyes all beliefe of Gods Power and Providence, in his ordering and guidance of Actions according to his own Will: For who is there, that underſtands any thing of Gods Soveraignty, but muſt needs acknowledge, that he foreſaw and predetermined every thing long before it was actually in being; but were there ſuch an Independent and Abſolute Free-will *in Man, as ſome contend for, how the motions of his Will could be fore-ſeen is altogether Inconceivable:* Socinus *therefore, who ſaw how much this Argument did preſſe him, did make no ſcruple to deny Gods* Preſcience: *thereby doing that very thing, which* Auſtine *complained of in* Tully, Dum fecit liberos, fecit etiam Sacrilegos: While he made Men Free, he did moſt ſacrilegiouſly rob God of his chief Prerogative, *and that is, his* Omniſcience: *The* Arminians *therefore, who grant both* Preſcience *in God, and* Free-will *in Man, do admit both parts of the Contradiction to be True; and ſo not onely thwart the expreſſe Revelation of Scripture, which every where inculcates Gods* Abſolute *and* Irreſpective Election, *but likewiſe ſpeak that, which, in Reaſon (to which they pretend ſo much) neither themſelves nor any one elſe can poſſibly underſtand.*

Secondly, The Opinion of Free-will *utterly cuts off all manner of Prayer: For wherein the greateſt Argument of Prayer ought either to be for* Pardoning *or* Preventing Grace; *with what face can he aske for* Pardon, *who by owning himſelf to have a ſufficient Power to do Gods Will, doth thereby acknowledge all his ſins, not to proceed from Surprize, Inadvertency or Weakneſſe, but to be ſins of his Will, and therein himſelf to be a Wilfull and a Malicious Tranſgreſſour? The Saints of old did uſe to plead for themſelves, their* Raſhneſs *and* Haſte, *as* David; *their* Ignorance *and* Unbelief, *as* Paul; *their* Incogitancy *and* Unmindfulneſs, *as* John;

but he that holds Free-will; *makes all those Apologies to be vain and uselesse, since every offence in such an one must needs arise from his own Resolved and Designed Pravity; and sins of Infirmity in others, in him are sins of strength; because he might have avoided them, and would not: which discovers so grosse an Enmity and Opposition against God, that all the while, that sentence remains upon Record,* If we sinne wilfully after we have received the knowledg of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for sinne; *it will be impossible for such an one to look up with Faith, and believingly to sue out his Pardon. And as with Pardoning, so likewise will it fare with Preventing and strengthning Grace; Free-will makes the one Desperate, and the other Uselesse. For what need I pray for that, which I have already by me; nay, which I am sure shall never, so long as I am a man, be taken from me. No man prayes for the Money that is in his Chest; nor for those goods, that he stands possessed of. So neither can we, without being guilty of* Vain-babling, *pray for strength to do Gods will, if we think every man Naturally hath a power to do it.* I will pray (*said one of the most learned Assertors of* Free-will, for Fortune and Riches, for these are in Gods Gift; but not for Virtue, for that I can give my self. *Whereas he that knows he stands by Grace; that he cannot doe any thing well, but as the Spirit of God doth act him: and that the Actings of the Spirit, are Arbitrary, not at ours, but at his own Disposal; he will find a Necessity upon him, to be often begging for that strength, which he sees he wants, and God alone can furnish him with.*

Tully.

Thirdly, Another Inconvenience of this Opinion of Free-will *is, that it must needs betray poor Sinners to a delaying and putting off their Repentance: For he that finds it written, how ready God is to pardon upon Repentance; and is told withall, that it lies in his power to Repent, whenever he pleases; cannot be wrought upon by any Argument that I know of, to forbear his sinfull pleasures for one Moment. At least, why he should make such haste, as the Scripture doth presse in to, there can be no Imaginable Motive. For if I live according to this Doctrine, I shall be sure to give my self* Repentance; *because I have a Natural Ability to do it; and that any man now living should be so suddenly strook, as not to have time enough for that Work, (which whenever it is done, it is done in a*

moment,

moments thought it may perhaps not be evidenced so soon) it so much ods, that any Sinner may safely venture to try a little longer the pleasures of Sinne, before he resolves by too sudden a Repentance to leave them. Whereas he that owns every good Motion inviting that way, to be, not the Impulse of his own Heart, but the Calling of Gods Spirit; which, like light, may shine for a time, and suddenly be withdrawn again; he will find himself engaged to Answer at the first Call; least, while he tarries, God leaves off to call him, and gives him over as unworthy of Mercy, because of his Stubborn Refusall.

4. It is impossible but those who are leavened with this Doctrine, must needs be swelled with Pride; and puffed up with conceit of themselves, above all other men: since they imagin all their Graces, to be purely the result of their own well managing and improving their Naturall Abilities. This was the Temper of the Pharisees heretofore, who justified themselves and despised others, for as Josephus tells us, they were extremely addicted to the Opinion of Free-will, and it appears in that they so much overvalued their own Power, that they would needs be more Holy and Righteous than the Law of God commanded; and therefore found out New Ceremonies, and many self-invented Forms of Devotion, which were their Works of Supererogation; which Humour still reignes, as a Naturall Effect of it, among all those severall Parties, where the Opinion of Free-will is entertained. Whereas the Acknowledging that Gods Grace onely fills the Soul, and we, like Empty Vessels, have nothing but what we daily receive, will keep the Mind humble and Thankfull as to God; and likewise Tender and Compassionate towards others, who may for the present want the same Mercy which we enjoy.

Lastly, I might adde, that the whole Practice of Will-worship, whether it relates to the Inventing of uncommanded Methods in Divine Worship, or to the Imposing of such usages upon others, is altogether founded upon a supposition that every Man hath Free-will; and therefore Magistrates conceiving it doth not arise from Tenderness of Conscience, but meerly from an Affected Obstinacy, that Men submit not to their Injunctions, it makes them more Harsh and Rigorous in exacting Obedience, than otherwise they would ever attempt to doe; which thing alone makes the Belief of

Free-

Free-will in Religious matters, *altogether inconsistent with and destructive of the Peace of Christian societies; as every age, wherein there hath been the least dawings of Spirituall Light doth abundantly evidence. All the sufferings of the Saints, having been inflicted upon them upon this single account, in that when they refused to* Worship the Beast or his Image, *their Persecutors thought, it lay in their Power, to doe him that Homage; whereas indeed it did not, it being impossible for any to avoid or forbear acting according to the Dictates of a Well-grounded and Conscientious Perswasion.*

But whenas in opposition to all this, the maintainers of Free-will, *doe urge that the Contrary Doctrine of Free Grace doth* open a door to all manner of Licentiousness, since by leaving nothing in mans power, it leaves them free to doe nothing; *and likewise, that* it makes void and Ineffectuall all Gods Commands, which suppose a Power of Obeying in us, or else they had been given in vain: *which Objections being managed by persons of much Rhetorick, and outward Sanctity, doe make a great Impression upon a Slight and Unwary Reader: I have therefore in this Treatise, fully, at least to my own satisfaction, answered both those Objections; and have as I hope sufficiently demonstrated, that nothing doth more incline the soul to a Cheerfull Obedience, than a right Understanding of the Doctrine of* Free-grace; *which because it is the business of this Book to evidence, I will no longer detain the Reader from it, but recommend It, for its Success and Issue, to the same Grace, which first gave it Birth and Beginning.*

June 11° 1662.

Edward Bagshawe.

THE

Errata.

Page 4. line 24. dele *but*. p. 19. l. 28. read *but by the*. p. 30. l. 23, 24. dele ( ) p. 33. l. 4. r. *Affections*. lb. l. 17. r. τεθλιμμένα.

THE Doctrine of FREE-GRACE no Doctrine of Licentiousnes.

Rom. 6. 1, 2.

What shall we say then? shall we continue in sinne that Grace may abound? Farre be it: How shall we that are dead to sinne, live any longer therein?

These are the words of the Apostle *Paul*, brought in by way of Objection, against, and of Answer, for, that Doctrine of *Free-Grace*, which he doth in this Epistle expresly handle: For the understanding of his Discourse, we must have recourse unto *Chap. 3.* where after a long and accurate handling of this Question, *How a man comes to be Justified in the sight of God?* the Apostle concludes Λογιζόμεθα οὖν, *We inferre therefore*, or, *argue from the Premises* (as the word signifies) *that a man is justified by Faith, without the Works of the Law.* The reason and ground of which Assertion is this, *Because by the Law is the knowledge of sinne*, i.e. A strict and impartiall view of the Law, in its latitude and spirituall

signifi-

significancy; and comparing of our Lives with it, is so farre from discovering the Rectitude of our Nature and Actions, that it rather serves to manifest the Obliquity and sinfullnes of them both: And therefore there must be some other expedient found out, to render or Justifie
verf. 27. men in the sight of God, than an appeal unto the *Law of Works*; and that is, *the Law of Faith*, as the Apostle speaks, *The Righteousnes of God*, (*i.e.* which avails be-
verf. 22. fore God, and is accepted by him) *is by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*, (whereby is meant, either the Graces which God requires, or the Happiness which he promises: Men were not of themselves able to perform the one, and therefore had no Right or Title unto the other) whereupon it follows, that all such as are Justified, *are Justified Freely by his Grace, through the Redemption, that is in*, or by *Jesus*.

This Doctrine, which doth so levell the Pride of man, by putting his Salvation quite out of himself, and therein is utterly contradictory to humane conception, the Apostle foresaw, would meet with great opposition, and therefore that he might Assert and Clear this Fundamentall Truth from all possibility of Cavill, he urges and answers three of the main Objections, which either are or can be alleaged against it.

Object. 1. The first Objection is taken from the Example of *Abraham*, concerning whom the common opinion of the Jews was, that he was *Justified by Works*; which they gathered from Gods renewing his *Blessing* upon him, after
Gen. 22. 12. his signall obedience in attempting to offer his sonne. *For now I know*, saith God, *that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy sonne, thine onely sonne from me.* And

again, *Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy sonne, thine onely sonne; In blessing I will bless thee.* Whereupon the Apostle *James* seems clearly to Affirm, that *Abraham* was justified by his Works, in that Question, *Was not Abraham our Father Justified by Works, when he had offered Isaac his sonne upon the Altar?* vers. 16, 17.

To this Instance, the Apostle answers by directly denying that *Abraham was Justified by Works*; for proof of which, he quotes a place out of the *Old Testament*. That *Abraham believed in God, and it*, i.e. that Faith of his, *was imputed to him for Righteousness*. Which was spoken of *Abraham*, long before he had received *Circumcision*, and done that Signall and Heroick Action, by which the Sincerity and Truth of his Faith was evidenced. So that the Apostle *James* words cannot be understood, as if he intended to decide whether *Faith* or *Works* did *Justifie*; but onely that he determins what kind of *Faith* it was which Justified, *viz.* not a Naked and Barren, but an Effectuall and Working Faith. And that *Abrahams* was such a kind of Faith, he manifested afterwards, in undertaking so Perillous and Dangerous a Task, meerly in obedience to Gods Command. From whence it follows, that if *Abraham*, who is stiled, *the Friend of God*, did attain to the esteem of being reputed *Righteous before God*, meerly upon the account of his Faith; then all others, whose highest commendation is onely to be the Followers and Imitators of *Abraham*, have no other way of obteining *True Righteousness*, but by treading in the same *footsteps of Faith*, which the Patriark *Abraham* walked in: as the Apostle concludes, *It was not written for him, i.e.* for *Abraham* alone, *that it was imputed to him: But to us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him,* Answ. Gen. 15. 6. Rom. 4. 23, 24.

him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the Dead.

Object.2. The second Objection against this Doctrine, is taken from that seeming Absurdity and Contradiction, which would follow, should men think of being saved by the Righteousness of another. For as every man is to be condemned, onely for his own sinnes, so it seems to be most Just and Equall, that every man should be saved onely for his own Righteousness: according to the Reasoning of God himself, who doth not onely say, that the *Wickedness of the Wicked*, but likewise that the *Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him.* Ezek. 18.20.

Answ.2. To this Objection, the Apostle excellently answers throughout the whole *fifth Chapter* of this Epistle, by drawing a *parallel* between *Adam* and *Christ*; who were the two great Heads and Representatives of all Mankind, in their severall Estates. Now if it shall appear that *Adam* destroyed his Race, by the *Imputation of his sinne*; then it cannot be Unreasonable to believe, that *Christ* may save his Race, by the *Imputation of his Righteousness.* But that *Adam* destroyed his Race, by the Imputation of his sinne, appears clearly from hence, in that *Death*, which is the *Wages of sinne*, vers. 14. doth actually seize those, who never Actually sinned, and therefore could be but liable to it, onely upon the Account of Transmitted, Derivative and Imputed sinne; as he Argues, *Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adams Transgression*, i.e. over Infants. From whence he inferres, *As by one mans disobedience, Many* (i.e. All who descend from him by Naturall Generation) *were made sinners: so by the obedience of one man, Many* (i.e. all who are related to him by Faith, and supernaturall Regeneration) *shall be made Righteous.* Nay by how much *Christ*

is

is a greater Person than *Adam*, (the one being *formed from Earth*, the other being *the Lord from Heaven*) by so much shall the Obedience and Righteousness of that One, more avail to Save, than the Unrighteousness and Sinne of the other did to Destroy. And this the Apostle clears in two Particulars: 1 Cor. 15. 47.

1. In Extent of the Pardon; which is *to many sinnes*, whereas the Condemnation was onely *for One*. For, saith he, *the Judgment*, or *κρῖμα Guilt was by one*, i.e. Offence, to *Condemnation*; *but the free-gift is of many Offences, unto Justification*. In *Adam*, one sinne, and that of the lesser sort, stiled *παράπτωμα a slip* or so, was sufficient to undoe a World. But in *Christ*, Many sins, how aggravated and circumstanced soever, shall not be sufficient to destroy one Soul, vers. 16.

2. In the Excellence of the purchase: *Adam*, by his Sinne, purchased *Death* and *Damnation*; which is, like a Motion down-hill, very Naturall and easie to be conceived: For that a Creature, should die; that a Sinner, should be sentenced, may without any Difficulty be imagined: But *Christ* purchased *Life Eternall*, which is like a Motion up-hill, very Hard and exceeding Difficult to be comprehended. From whence the Apostle concludes, that *where Sinne*, i.e. the Guilt or Demerit of *Adams* Sinne, *abounded*, *there Grace*, or the Gift of Life by *Christ*, *did much more abound*. The word in the Originall, signifies *something more than enough*; something, that was above and beyond what was sufficient, to Antidote and to Expell the Contagion of *Adams* sinne: Just as if a Man should let in a Sea to cleanse a sink; so abundant was the *Overflow* of *Christs Righteousnesse*, for the Purifying of those Natures, which *Adams* sinne had infected. ὑπερεπερίσσευσε.

Object. 3. The third and last Objection is contained in the Text, and the sense of it amounts to this: Some may say, If the Merit of *Christs* Death, doth so infinitely transcend the Demerit of *Adams* Sinne, as the word ὑπερπερισσεύειν imports; then, will it not follow from hence, that *the Gospell* will be a Rule of Strictness and Severity of Life, no longer; but rather set open a door to all manner of Impiety, since this Conclusion may easily be drawn: Since Gods Goodness is so Free, as well as full; since *Christ*, in the most proper acception, did *die for Sinners*; will it not follow, the greater Sinners we are, the more acceptable we shall be to *Christ*; and the more Offences we commit, the better will his Goodness in pardoning them appear: As to run upon the Score, is the best way to set out and to adorn a Creditors *Munificence*. *Come on then*, will wicked men say, *Let us sinne that Grace may abound.*

Answ. To this Odious and Unworthy Inference, which yet, so corrupt and disingenuous is our Nature, most men are ready, not onely to Reason, but to Live by, the Apostle returns a double Answer.

1. In a Phrase of Abhorrency, μὴ γένοιτο: He seems, as it were, to start and to blush at the bare mention of such a supposall, and therefore hastily cries out, *Farre be it*, that any should be such a Wretch, as to make Rich and Undeserved Mercy, a Motive of his Contumacy; that any should therefore presume to Offend, because God is Willing to Pardon; that any should therefore spurn their Heavenly Father on the *Bowels*, because they are *Tender* and Yearn toward them: This doth not use to be our manner of dealing with Men, and therefore *Farre be it*, that any should thus deal with God.

2. He answers by instancing in the Life of Himself, and those Believing *Romanes*, to whom he writes; As if he had

had said, *Farre be it*, that any should make such Impious Conclusions, from so Holy, and so Gracious Premises; that any should presume to Poison themselves, because there is an Antidote so neer them: If any doe so, it is their own Fault; for we have experimentally found this Doctrine of *Free-Grace*, to have had a clean contrary Effect and Operation upon us; and instead of Exciting us to Sinne, even to cut up and root out in us, not onely the Acts, but even the Habit of Sinfulness: *How then*, saith he, *shall we that are dead to sinne, live any longer therein?* Which being the Full scope and Design of the Apostles whole Discourse, it affords us this usefull Observation:

That the best and most effectuall way to mortifie the Power of Indwelling sinne, is to consider how free, how Absolute, how Unconditionall Gods Grace is in pardoning it.

Before I proceed to handle this, I must needs take notice of the Objection, and from thence observe;

That Corrupt and Curious Wits, doe usually draw pernicious and destructive consequences from the most Precious and Soul-saving Truths. For Instance; What Doctrine can be more Winning to a Desperate, or more comfortable, to a Despairing Sinner; than to hear, that *Christ* hath already fully satisfied for Sinne; that God is *willing to be reconciled*; that notwithstanding his Greatness, he even woes us to be at Peace with him; and, in token of his Readiness, he offers us Peace and Pardon, unclogged with any Condition; he requires nothing but *Faith*, i.e. a Naked and an Empty hand, to take what he is willing in Bounty to bestow. Yet the Disputer in my Text, labours to make this Sweet, appear to be very Unsound Doctrine; and would fright men from embracing their Cordiall, lest by accident it should heighten and encrease their Distemper. *Doct.* 1.

Distemper. Thus it hath fared with all the Abstruse and most Mysterious Points of our Religion; the *Incarnation of the eternall Sonne of God*, the *Resurrection of the Body*, the *Assistance of the Holy Spirit in the Hearts of Believers*, have been all arraigned and set upon by them Irregular Fancies; and each Age hath produced some Sect or other, who have made themselves Famous by direct opposition unto those forementioned Truths. But to omit them, I shall content my self with those Instances which the Apostle makes in this Epistle, *Chap. 3.* He lays down this Conclusion, That God in the Wisdome of his Providence, so orders and manages all Events, as that out of *Evill*, he doth extract *Good*; and makes even our *Unrighteousnesse*, to set off and to illustrate his *Righteousnesse*: From whence one presently inferres, *then is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance*; i.e. Who punisheth men for that, which at last doth redound to the Advantage of his Glory; and then goes on, *Let us doe Evill, that good may come of it*: i.e. Let us Sinne, that Gods Glory may be promoted. Which Impious Deduction, whereby Gods Providence is made to countermand his Precepts, the Apostle confutes in that sharp Expression, *Whose Damnation is just*, i.e. such who will not actively Glorifie God by their Obedience unto his *Revealed Will*, God will get matter of Glory of them, by Punishing their Disobedience. Again in that Great Business of Gods *Absolute and unconditionall Electing* of some unto Eternall Life, the Apostle instanceth in the Examples of *Jacob* and *Esau*, who, when as yet neither of them *had done Good or Evill*, yet one was preferred before the other, for which the Apostle gives no other reason, but this, *That the Purpose of God, according to Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth.* Against which Unmerited

vers. 5.

Rom. 9.

Unmerited and Irrespective choice, there is One in that place objects, *Is there not then Unrighteousness with God?* i.e. Is not God Partiall and Unequall in his determinations concerning Man, thus to chuse and preferre one before another, when as by Nature, All are Equall? To this he answers, by alleaging God's Soveraignty, who in the case of *Pharaoh*, affirms of Himself, *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy*; and the Apostle inferres from thence, *and whom he will he hardens*; i.e. he showes no Mercy to, but leaves them in their Naturall Hardness and Impenitency. And when the Objector is not satisfied with this, but cries out, *Why doth he then find fault?* i.e. why doth he reprove and seem Angry against sinne and sinners? *for who hath resisted his Will?* The Apostle then in stead of answering any further, asks a Question, which the Bold Disputers of our times will never answer, and that is, *Who art thou O man who disputest against God?* by which way of Procedure, he sufficiently shews, that in the opening of Divine Misteries, nothing is more hard, than to stop a Disputers mouth. And the Reasons are

vers. 14.

vers. 15.

First, Because Men doe usually sound the Depths of God, by a very False and Imperfect Line; and that is, by *Naturall Reason*: There is indeed a Reason given to man, which is capable of the Highest Misteries; this in Philosophy, is called *Right*; in Scripture, *Enlightned Reason*; i.e. such a Reason as stoops and submits to Faith, and dares believe God in spight of all contrary suggestions. But all the while our Reason, is in its Native and Unreclaimed estate, *like a Bullock unaccustomed to the Yoke*, it kicks at every thing which it cannot comprehend. Thus even the most Holy men, while they did quit their safe Rule, which is Gods own manifesta-

Reason 1.

tion of his Wayes in Scripture, and ventured in their own Reasons to argue about Divine Providence; the *Prosperity of the Wicked*, was so Obvious, and withall so Great an Objection, that they were unable to resolve it; as appears by the Complaints and Inquietudes of *David*, *Jeremy*, *Habakuk*, and others upon this Subject. That alone which silenced *Job*, in the midst of his bold Expostulations, did likewise satisfie them; and that was, a distinct and clear Discovery of *Gods uncontrolable Soveraignty and Dominion over all his Creatures*; which ought to be admired at a distance by us, and not too curiously pried into, least so Wonderfull and Amazing an Object doe strike us Blind. Those Tenets, wherein Gods Honour is mainly concerned, such are, His managing of all Events, even the Sinnes of Man (as the Scripture tells us he did *pre-ordain the Treachery of Judas*) without any Imputation to his Holiness: His disposing of all Persons absolutely to their respective Ends, and without any Imputation to his Justice. Such things as these, the Apostle hath taught us to call ἀνεξιχνίαστα, *Unsearchable Paths*, in which onely an Humbled Soul can walk. Here if we will goe, we must goe groveling, with our *Faces in the Dust*, least if, like *Moses*, we draw neer to pry with too much curiosity, his *Dread doe fall upon us, and his Terrors make us afraid*. Till Humane Wisdome be throughly abased, and all the Pride of Earthly Knowledge be purged out, the more we strive to understand *the things of God*, the more we are entangled; till at last we come, not onely to Reject, but likewise to Revile them.

Pſal. 73. Jer. 12. Hab. 1.

Act. 1. 16. & 3. 28.

Rom 11. 33.

Reason 2. The second Reason is, Because men are not onely Shallow in their Apprehensions, but Rash and Hasty in their Conclusions. We are Naturally of Proud Impatient

tiant Spirits, and apt to range abroad, in quest, not of Truth, but, as those at *Athens, of something that is New*; Act. 17. without pursuing those firm grounds, whereupon to bottom and to fix a Perswasion. It is therefore the most common cause of all Practicall Errors in the World, that Men doe usually fasten upon that part of a Tenet, which favours them in their Lusts, without taking notice of the whole Compass and Latitude of it. Thus when a Sinner hears that *God is Mercifull*, he presently cries out, This is good News for me, for I am already, and resolve still to be a Sinner; never considering, that *Mercy leads to Repentance*, and it can no farther be pleaded, or pretended to by any, then as it doth influence us to return from Sinne to God. So perhaps some may argue, *If I am predestined to be saved, I shall be saved*; and what need I then trouble my self with Holiness? Whereas the *End* is never designed by God, but with Respect of and Subordination to the *Means*: And all the severall Stages in our Journey to Heaven, are appointed in the same Eternall Register, wherein the place it self is designed for us. In short, as in a Chain, when men catch hastily at the Link that is next them, without taking notice of the connexion and series whereby many are joyned together, the whole chain is apt thereby to be disordered and discomposed: so is it in Divine Truths, if we look not at the whole contexture of them, and that admirable dependance which each part hath upon the other; we are apt to be led away by our own Prejudices, and to draw Absurd and Monstrous Consequences, which, had we leasure to take a View of the Whole Body of Sacred Truth, we should not have adventured to doe. Herein mainly consists the Difference between *Truth* and *Error*: Error is then strongest, when it is considered Single;

but the strength of Truth lies in its standing linked and confederated unto other Doctrines: Therefore to single out any one Opinion, how true soever, and handle it apart, is, like the cutting of *Sampsons* Hair, it makes it less strong, and more liable to mis-construction: It robs it not onely of its Strength, but likewise of its Beauty.

Use. The Use hence is to Advise all, not to judge of any Opinion or Party of Men, by those Prejudices wherewith they are loaded, or by those Ill-favoured Consequences which may be wrested from their Doctrine; but let us labour to discern every thing, as it shines in its own Light, by the clearness of Scripture-discovery: All Truth, especially Divine, must be tried by its Evidence, and not by its Consequences. When we have tired out our selves and others with needless Objections, one *Scriptum est*, wherewith our Saviour answered the Devill, will stand like a Rock, and abide all those Waves of Opposition, which don't so much Batter Scripture, as Dash and Break themselves upon it. And if ever this Advice were necessary, certainly this Age, wherein we live, doth most of all require it; in which, whatever may lessen and undervalue Scripture is let in and broken loose upon us. For what by *Humane Additions*, on the one side; and by Pretences to more *Immediate Revelations* on the other, the Scripture, which is the *Undoubted Word of God*, is robbed of its Sufficiency and Perfection; and harder Conditions are required of us, for the attaining of Eternall Life, than those which our Saviour hath enjoyned us, *viz.* To Believe, and to Obey him alone. Let us therefore bring both our own, and all other mens Opinions, unto this Touchstone, and when we have found a *Sic dixit Deus*, *the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*, for any thing in controversie, let us stick to that Declaration, without ever troubling

troubling our selves with Consequences, which are but so much Dust thrown in our Eyes, to keep us from discerning our Duty. Should we ever quit this hold, I can see nothing before me but *Sea* and *Aire*, i.e. a Wide and Endless Labyrinth of Inextricable Error: But while we stick fast to this Rule, we may indeed erre in the *Comment*, but we are sure the *Text* is *Infallible*. And the more Submiss and Silent our Reason is, in things which may at first blush appear Strange and Contradictory, the more, I will not say Meritorious, but Pleasing and Acceptable is our Obedience.

Having thus dispatched that Observation which the Objection in my Text did lead me to, I come now to the Doctrine which I first raised, and which takes in the whole Scope and Design of the Apostles arguing, *viz. That the Best and most Effectuall Way to mortifie the power of Indwelling Sinne, is rightly to consider how Free, Absolute and Unconditionall, Gods Grace is in pardoning it.* In which there are these three Points to be explained.

1° That, *Gods Grace, in pardoning Sinne, is Absolute, Free and Unconditionall.*

2° That, *A Considerate and fixed Belief of this, is the best way to mortifie the Power of Indwelling Sinne.* *Observ.* 2.

3c That, *A Believer, must never think he hath arrived to the Truth of his Profession, till Sinne is mortified in him*: or, in the Apostles words, *Till he is dead to Sinne.*

The first Point is, That, *Gods Grace in pardoning Sinne, is Absolute, Free and Unconditionall.* I mean, respecting nothing in, requiring nothing from the creature, as that which may merit and deserve such Favour. Thus all the Promises run, *I will take them*, saith God speaking of the New Covenant or Gospell-Times, *to be my People,* *Doct.* 1.

Jer.31.33. *and I will be their God: For I will Forgive their Iniquities, and I will remember their Sinnes no more.* So speaking of the same Covenant by the Prophet *Ezekiell, I will,* Ezek.36.25. saith he, *sprinkle clean water upon you, and from all your Filthiness will I cleanse you.* Which gracious Promise, least it should seem to respect any thing in them as meritoriously exciting it, God doth expressly premise, *I doe* vers.22. *not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy Names sake.* And again concludes it thus, *Not for* vers.32. *your sakes doe I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you.* Therefore in that Form of Words, which God prescribes unto *Returning Backsliders,* he commands them to Hos.14.2. say, *Lord take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously.* vers.4. To which God presently replies, *I will heal their Backslidings, I will love them Freely.* But besides what may be deduced from the whole Tenour and Current of Scripture-Promises, this will yet farther appear from these three Considerations:

Reason 1. First, From the Nature of God who pardons Sinne, who cannot be moved or altered by any condition in the Creature, since he himself is the sole Author and Bestower of whatever good condition the Creature is able to perform. For according to the Question of the Apo- Rom.11.33. stle *Paul, Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompenced to him again?* or, as the words are in *Job,* Job 41.11. from whence the Apostle took them, *Who hath prevented me,* sc. by doing for me, *that I should repay him?* Hereby intimating, that none hath or is able so to doe any thing for God, as that he should thereby challenge any thing from him, by way of Recompence: As the words following in that place imply, For *whatever is under the whole Heaven is mine.* When therefore the Holy Men doe begge pardon of Sinne, their finall resort is to Gods

Mercy

Mercy or Power; as *Moses* when he intercedes for *Israel*; *And now let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long suffering and of great Mercy, forgiving Iniquity and Transgression.* Numb 14. 17. And so he goes on, *Forgive I pray thee the Iniquity of this People, according to the greatness of thy Mercy.* So the Prophet *Micah*, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage, because he delighteth in Mercy.* Mic. 7. 18. 19. Whereas did consideration of any thing in the Creature, move God to shew Compassion; Forgiveness from him, would no longer be *Grace* but *Debt*; and God in pardoning Sinne, would not exert an act of *Power*, but an act of *Justice*: and Men might challenge not onely Pardon of Sinne, but likewise, Heaven it self, as a Reward of their Performances. Which is quite contrary to the whole Current of Scripture, and to all those Conceptions, which the Majesty and Greatness of God, together with the Vileness and Despicable meanness of the Creature, must needs enforce upon all Rationall and Considerate Men. Since therefore the Promises of God run Absolutely, since the Nature of God is Inalterably, *i.e.* Freely Gracious; they neither consult Gods Honour, nor the Comfort of doubting Christians, who interpose the Clog of any preceding Condition. They are very unfaithfull Embassadours to the King of Heaven, who streighten their Commission; and speak Peace and Pardon in Terms less generall, than they have received.

Secondly, This will appear yet farther from Consi- *Reason* 2. deration of the Price, which was paid for Sinne. For though God pardons sinne *Freely*, in reference to us, since we neither did nor could deserve it; yet it was not Free in reference to our *Surety*; by Christ this was dearly bought,

bought, and whatever we enjoy thereof, was first sealed, and comes down streaming to us, in the *Blood of the Mediator*. Now to know the Greatness of the Price, the best way will be to consider the Greatness of the Person, who paid it. In the beginning of *Johns* Gospell, we read of one, whom he there stiles Λόγος, i.e. *Reason* or the *Eternall Spring of Wisdome*, of him it is said, *that he was with God*, nay *that he was God*; and *as God did make the World*. If we look a little farther, we shall find that this very Person, this Λόγος-Σὰρξ ἐγένετο, i.e. *became Flesh*, or *frail Man*, and laying aside the Glory of his Divinity for a time ἐσκήνωσεν *Tabernacled*, or *pitched his Tent* among the sonnes of Men. It was this σὰρξ, this *assumed Nature* of his, which he sacrificed as a Victim to appease his Fathers Anger, and to expiate the sinnes of the world; according as he speaks himself. *The Bread that I will give you, is my Flesh*, or *my Humane Nature, which I will give for the Life of the World*. Where by *World* is not, nor cannot be meant, the *Generality of Man-kind*, of which the greatest part perish, which could not possibly be, had Christ actually shed his Blood for them: but, as our Saviour explains himself in another place, *His Sheep*, or *the Generality of Believers* scattered throughout the world: so that the word *World*, is of the same Extent with the word *Many*, which our Saviour else-where useth. As in *Matthew*, *the Sonne of Man came to give his life a Ransome for*, or, *in stead of many*. And afterward, *This is the Blood of the New Covenant, which was shed for Many, for Remission of Sinnes*. That we may know the inestimable value of this Blood, it is called by the Apostle *Paul*, and that without a Figure *the Blood of God*, i.e. which the Sonne of God shed in that Humane Nature, which he had united unto himself. Who is there then that will not think

Joh. 1.

Joh. 6. 51.

Joh. 10. & c. 11. v. 52.

Mat. 20. 28.

Ἀντὶ πολλῶν. Mat. 26. 28.

Act. 20. 28.

think ſuch Blood ſufficient Ranſome? For as the Apoſtle argues excellently, *If the Blood of Bulls and Goats ſanctifies to the purifying of the Fleſh; How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternall Spirit, offered himſelf up to God, purge our Conſcience from Dead Works*, i.e. Cleanſe our Souls both from the Leproſie and Guilt of Sinne? So that to eek out this Sacrifice, by mingling with it any Vain Oblations of our own, is nothing elſe but to leſſen its value, as they, who light up their Candles at noon-day, doe onely Affront and Prejudice the ſplendour of the Sunne. When ſuch a Price is already paid, for any to appear Nice and Dainty, to cry out they are not Humbled, not Sorrowfull, not Thankfull Enough, and therefore neglect to make uſe of it, this is nothing elſe, but either Peeviſhly, to refuſe offered Comfort; or elſe Proudly, to think we are able by our delay to make our ſelves worthy of it. Heb. 9. 13.

Thirdly, The laſt Argument may be taken from the Impoſſibility there is, that we ſhould be able to perform any thing acceptably unto God, till we are come within the Terms of the Covenant; Then are we within the Covenant on Gods part, when we have accepted it on ours: but till then, we are under the Law, all our Works are Legall Works, and our *Repentance it ſelf is to be repented of*; as being infinitely ſhort of that Perfection which the Law requires. Beſides, upon ſuppoſition that ſuch a meaſure of *Humiliation, Sorrow, Contrition*, or other ſuch like Acts, were prerequired to capacitate and make us fit for the receiving of our Pardon; what infinite diſquiets muſt this needs beget in every Sinner, that is now upon the point of his Converſion, for who ſhall be able to fix a juſt Proportion? or aſſuredly tell him, that he hath grieved and mourned enough; ſince there *Reaſon* 3.

can be no Proportion between our Sinne and our Sorrow, and likewise our Bodies may be wasted with Grief, and our Eyes fail us with weeping, and yet all our Fears, prove onely an Idle and a Fruitless Expence, as *Cains* and *Judas* did. There can be therefore no better or more warrantable Advice be given unto a poor lamenting Creature, than to bid him leave off his Works, and throw himself immediately into the Arms of Mercy: since who so rests upon his own Endeavours, labours in the very Fire, and undertakes a Task beyond his manage, in thinking to Fit himself for Mercy; whereas it must be Mercy, already in some measure apprehended, which must qualifie and fit us for the receiving more.

Object. 1. Mar. 16. Acts 3, 19. Against this it may be objected, That the Promise in the Gospell runs, *He that believeth, shall be saved*, and the Command by the Apostle is, *Repent that your sinnes may be blotted out.* From whence it may be gathered, that *Faith* and *Repentance* are required as Conditions to Remission; and that Pardon of Sinne is not so Absolute on Gods part, but that still something must be done on ours, to qualifie us for the receiving it. But I answer

Answ. 1. For *Repentance*, that is no distinct and separate condition of it self, because it alwayes follows Faith, and can no more be severed from it, than Motion from Life: whence it is that the Apostles doe promiscuously use one for the other; as *Peter*, to those who were wrought on by his Sermon, and came to him for Direction, he bids them *Repent*; Acts 2.37. but *Paul*, to the Jaylor who was in the same case, he commands him to *Believe*; and our Saviour joyns them both together, in that Epitome of his first Sermon, Mar. 1.13. *Repent and believe the Gospell*: thereby intimating that one could not be without the other. Therefore

2. Though *Faith* be required as a Condition to the receiving

receiving of *Christ* and Pardon by him, yet it is such a Condition, as takes nothing at all from the Freeness of Gods Gift; no more than Emptying the Hand, and taking an Almes, doth lessen his Bounty that bestowes it. For *Faith* is nothing else but a Naked Hand, and hath no influence at all upon Gods Gift, to make it more or less Free; but all its influence is downwards, by applying and appropriating of that Gift, to make it Ours. And therefore in Scripture-language, to *Believe in Christ*, and *to Receive Him*, is the same thing: As *John* speaks, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sonnes of God, even to as many as believe on his Name.* Joh. 1. 12.

As a Medicine may be given *gratis* by a Physician, he may ask nothing for it, yet except the sick-man take it, it will not cure him: So God offers *Christ* and *Mercy* freely, but unless we *Believe* i.e. *Receive* him, he will not profit us. And in this, and no other sense is Faith a Condition. But

3. Even in this signification, as Faith signifies not a power of Acting, but meerly a power of Accepting, yet so it is a Condition, onely of Gods bestowing, and not of Mans procuring. Thus our Saviour: *None can come unto me* (i.e. *believe on me*, as he there explains) *except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* Joh. 6. 44. vers. 35. And again, *He that hath heard, and learned of the Father, he cometh unto me*; so, *No man can come unto me, except it were given to him of my Father.* vers. 45. All which places show, that *Faith*, which is *a coming to Christ*, is not wrought in any but peculiar Power and Influence of God. vers. 64. And accordingly, the Apostle *Paul*, *By Grace*, saith he, *are ye saved, through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God*, i.e. That Faith by which ye are enabled to receive Christ, is as much the Gift of God, as Christ himself who is received Ephes. 2. 8.

by it. Therefore he prayes, that they may be strengthened *by the Spirit of God, in the Inner Man*, that so, *Christ might dwell in their Hearts by Faith*: intimating, that, without such Supernaturall Assistance, they neither could nor would Believe.

c.3.16,17.

Object. 2. Against this it may be objected again, If God alone gives Faith, why then are we commanded to *Believe* and to *Repent*, for this presupposes a Power in the Creature to Obey, or else the Command would be in vain.

Answ. I answer, That Gods command doth not alwayes presuppose a Power already existing in the Creature, but being a Word from God, it gives that Power which was not there before. As when God said, *Let there be Light*, there was no activity in that Dark *Chaos*, sufficient of it self to produce it, but God by his Word at the same time created what he did command. To which Action of Gods, the Apostle compares his bringing any to the Knowledg of Christ; *God*, saith he, *that commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shone into our Hearts, to give unto us the Knowledg of his Glory in the Face of Christ.* So in the New Testament, when our Saviour commanded *the Sea to be still, the Blind to See, the Dead to Rise*, &c. there was no Ability in those Creature to Obey his Commands, but his Command, going out with Divine Authority, gave unto them Power: so when the Ministers of the Gospell command Sinners *to Believe*, and *to Repent*, the word goes out in the Name and in the Strength of God, and, whereever it is effectuall, it conveighs that Power, which was not there before. And this is it, which makes *Preaching* necessary unto the worlds end, because the Spirit of God doth cooperate with it; as the Apostle hath it, when he commands a Minister to be Meek, and ready to Teach even those that set themselves

2 Cor.4.6.

selves to oppose the Truth: *if*, saith he, *peradventure God will give them Repentance:* We Preach to, and Pray for Sinners, onely with a *Peradventure*; perhaps, God may work some good by us; but if God doth not work, our Words cannot, and the Sinner himself will not. 2 Tim. 2. 24.

This may serve to reach all those, who begin to be troubled for their past Sinnes, which way they must take to arrive unto Comfort and satisfaction. There are some Ignorant and Unskilfull Physicians of the Soul, who prescribe *Fasting, Penance, Uneasie Postures of Prayer,* and the like, which are at the best but *Bodily exercise,* which Profits little, because it reacheth not to the Core of Sinne, that lies within. Such kind of Methods as these, doe onely prune and lop the Branches of Corruption, but leave the Root entire; Men may in a needless Rigour starve their Bodies, and all the while doe nothing else but feed their Pride. My advice rather is, to a disconsolate Sinner, that he would presently lay hold upon his Pardon: And my grounds for this Advice are these two. *Use.* 1 Tim. 4.

1. Nothing doth more engage us in a Wilfull and Deliberate Course of Sinning than Despair of Pardon. When once *Cain* cries out, that his *Sinne was greater than could be forgiven*; the next News we hear of him, is, That *he went out from the Presence of the Lord.* Thus when God summoned the People by his Prophet *Jeremy*, to *return from the Evill of their Wayes*, he brings them in saying, *There is no Hope*; and then it presently follows, *but we will walk in the Imagination of our own Hearts.* The Apostle *Peter* therefore exhorting those to whom he writes, to make a Progress in Holiness, by adding one Grace to another,---*But he*, saith he, *who wants these things is blind, forgetting that he was cleansed from his old sinnes*; thereby intimating, that as Presumption begets Confidence, so *Motive* 1. Gen. 4. Jer. 18. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 9.

Despair begets Carelesness in Sinning. As we read of some, *who have died for fear of Death*; so is it in this case, when men dare so much wrong Gods goodness, as to imagin, that he will not make good his Promise to them, though it runs Indefinitely, they runne so farre in Sinne, till at last they dare not think of Returning; which seems to have been *Davids* case, when he cries out, *Innumerable Evils have compassed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.* While he stayed and forbore to pass the *Ford* which Mercy had shallowed for him, his Sinnes like a Torrent, began to overwhelme him with horror and amazement.

Motive 2. 2. Pardon of Sinne---for the time past, and Power against Sinne for the time to come, goe both together. As when a Judge doth free a Prisoner, at the same time he gives him Liberty, he knocks off his Chains; so when God intends to doe good unto a Sinner, he *never severs his Gifts*, but compleats the work of his Redemption, by Purifying and strengthening Grace at the same time. As he speaks by the Prophet, *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean:* then he presently adds, *A new heart also will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my wayes, and you shall keep my Judgments and doe them.* And the reason of this is clear, because when a Sinner hath once received his Pardon, he may boldly goe to God and Christ, and by Prayer engage their Power in his behalf; but till then, he is not able to doe any thing; he cannot pray in Faith, because he hath no Assurance that he shall be heard; he cannot act in Faith, because he hath no Promise that he shall be assisted; but when once he hath taken, what God

Ezek. 36.

offers

offers, he hath a certainty of both.

But ſome may object, That were their Sinnes leſs, then there was ſome Hope; but their Sinnes have been ſo many, and ſo ſtrangely aggravated, that they muſt needs ſit down under the ſorrow, as being in an hopeleſs condition. *Object.*

For anſwer, I wiſh all thoſe who make this Objection, (as indeed none ever thinks of returning to God but *he meets with this Lion in his way*) would ſeriouſly ask, whether they find themſelves as Willing to forſake their Sinnes, as they pretend to be ſorry for them. And if they doe, then let them conſider theſe three things: *Anſw.*

1. The Latitude and Extent of Chriſts Death; I doe not mean as to the Univerſality of the Perſons (for I find no ground for that) but as to the Qualifications of thoſe for whom Chriſt died: And we ſhall find it was for *Sinners*, for the *Ungodly*, for *Enemies*; from whence a Repenting Sinner may thus argue; If Chriſt died for Sinners, then certainly he will not refuſe me becauſe I have been a Sinner: If he died for Enemies, then ſure he will not caſt me off, if I am ready to lay down my Weapons, and be reconciled unto him. This was it which comforted *Paul*, *It is*, ſaith he, *a Faithfull ſaying, that Chriſt came to die for Sinners; among which I am chief:* he confeſſes as much Guilt, as could poſſibly ſtick to him, and yet takes comfort in that generall Truth, that Chriſt *came to die for Sinners:* And then propoſes his own Example, *For this cauſe I obtained Mercy, that in me firſt Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them which ſhould hereafter believe on him to life everlaſting.* We muſt take heed how we fruſtrate the Grace of God, for, as the Apoſtle argues, *If Righteouſneſs*, or *Juſtification had been by the Law, then had Chriſt died in vain:* Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

So,

So if Sinners, who are desirous above all things to come unto Christ, should therefore be driven out from him, because they have been Sinners, then would *Christ have died in vain.*

2. Consider the Freeness and Liberality of the Invitation: There is no condition so sad, but there is some word of Invitation or other, which particularly concerns that condition: The *Foolish and simple*, in *Proverbs*: The *Hungry and Thirsty*, in *Isay*: The *Weary and Heavy-laden*, in *Matthew*; and, which is beyond all, *Whoever will*, in the *Revelations*; *Whoever will, let him come and drink of the Water of Life freely.* There cannot be any thing more free and more inviting than this, that whoever will, may be sure of Well-come, I doe not say, that any Man hath this will of or from himself; but this I say, that he who hath a *Will*, hath a *Warrant*; and may boldly come to Christ, and claim the benefit of his Promise. Especially since Justification dependeth not at all upon our Working, but upon our Willing; as the Apostle hath it, *to him that worketh not* (that is, that bringeth no meritorious works along with him) *but believeth on him that justifies the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness,*

Prov.9.4,5.
Isa.55.1.
Mat.11.29.
Rev.22.17.

Lastly, Consider the Tender and the Compassionate Nature of Christ, how he never refused any that came unto him: And therefore *Lepers*, the *Blind* and *Lame*, *Publicans* and *Sinners* had on earth most both of his Presence and Power: The same Promises which, brought them, he hath left to encourage us---when he sayes--- *Every one that my Father giveth me will come unto me*; and *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* He that saith of himself, *He came*, not onely to *save*, but likewise, to *seek that which was lost*; will not be harsh to any, who

Joh.6.37.

are

are now upon the point of returning to him. Hence we read that *Peter*, who denied; *Paul*, who persecuted; the three thousand in the *Acts*, who crucified him, were all upon their Repentance received by him. Our Saviour hath the same Bowels still, and though he hath changed his Place, yet he hath not changed his Nature;---*Wherefore*, in the Apostles words, *since we have not an High-Priest, which cannot be touched with our infirmities: Let us come with boldness unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in a time of Need.* And so much for the first Point. Heb.4.15,16.

The second Point to be handled was this; That, *Nothing is more effectuall to mortifie the power of In-dwelling Sinne, than to consider how Free and Absolute Gods Grace is in pardoning it.* By *Free* here, that I may repeat what I mentioned a little before, I doe not mean *Free*, as excluding *Christ*, in consideration of whom, God is thus Free to Pardon (as the expressions run, *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself.* And, *We are justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus.* And, *In whom*, i.e. in Christ, *we have redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sinnes, according to the Riches of his Grace.* But I mean *Free*, as excluding our selves, or any thing we can doe, either as a *Cause* procuring, or as a *Condition* qualifying us for receiving this Grace. In this sense, that the Freeness of Gods Grace, is the best way to mortifie the Power of In-dwelling Sinne, will appear Doct. 2. 2 Cor.5.19. Rom.3.24.

1. From Instances.

2. From Reason.

1. For Instances; here is one occurres in the Text, *How shall we*, i.e. Believers, *who are dead to Sinne, live any longer therein?* i.e. In us, this Doctrine, being rightly understood, hath wrought to the killing of Sinne; since we

now learn how much we are indebted to Christ, and therefore something must be done to express our Thankfullness; which he prosecutes throughout the following Chapter; and uses an Argument to draw them off from sinning, which at first sight may seem Harsh and Inconsequent, but indeed is most demonstrably efficacious: Ye shall not sinne, or *sinne shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law* (which like *Pharaohs* Task-masters, requires the whole tale of Brick, and allows no straw) *but ye are under Grace* (ye now stand in those termes with God, that he gives strength, and accepts of what you doe in proportion to that Ability which he bestows) and for this Reason *Sinne shall not have dominion over you.* So again the Apostle in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, handling the same subject, he layes down this Position, *That a man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ*: Against which he brings an Objection, *But if*, saith he, *while we seek to be justified by Jesus Christ, we our selves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the Minister of sinne?* i.e. If we, who profess to be justified by Christ alone, doe notwithstanding sinne daily, will it not thence follow, that this Doctrine makes men careless, as if thereby they might take occasion to sinne more freely. To this the Apostle answers as he doth here, first μὴ γένοιτο, *Farre be it!* and then he urgeth to the contrary his own example—*I am crucified together with Christ*; and in another place, *Farre be it, that I should glory in any thing save in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World.* And what he affirms of himself, we find him, in another place, ascribing unto all Believers—οἱ δὲ Χριστοῦ—*They who are Christs*, i.e. who by Faith have received and are united to him; *have crucified the Flesh*, (i.e. their

Gal. 2. 16.

Gal. 6. 14.

Gal. 5. 24.

corrupt

corrupt and sinfull Nature) with the Affections and Lusts, &c. have rooted up as it were the very Fibres and lesser paracles, by which sinne was fastned and incorporated into them. And the Reason of this is clear:

Because, He who is once truly *in Christ*, i.e. who hath rightly apprehended him, forthwith becomes a *New creature*, as the Apostle argues, *Christ*, saith he, *died for All* i.e. Believers, *that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them*: From whence he inferres, *Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a New Creature*: i.e. he is altogether another kind of person than he was before. What the meaning of those words *New Creature* are, will best appear, by comparing two places of Scripture together: In one place it is, *In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a New Creature*; which in another place runs, *In Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by Love*. From whence it appears, that, in the Apostles sense, to be a *New Creature*, is nothing else, but to have a *Faith working by Love*, which, our old Nature, is no more capable of, than Darkness is of Light; but as soon as ever the Spirit of God begets Faith in the Heart of any, that Faith presently produceth Love, as Fire begets Heat, and then Love enflames and quickens to Obedience. As the Apostle *Paul* found it in himself, when he layes, *The Love of Christ constrains us*; since none can apprehend such an Excess and Overflow of Undeserved Love, but must needs think himself obliged to return all Acts of Love, whereby he may express his complacency in, and desire of a straighter Union. As the Apostle *John* argues, *we love him*, i.e. God, *because he loved us first*. Since then our Lord *Christ* is pleased with nothing more, than

Reason. 2 Cor. 5. 15, 17. Gal. 6. 15. Gal. 5. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 1 Joh. 4. 19.

with the *Crucifying of those Lusts*, and Mortifying of those Sinnes for which he died, it must needs follow from hence, that every Believer, and therein a Lover of Christ, will find himself sensibly stirred with the Hatred of Sinne, as often as he reflects upon the death of Christ; as men use to detest and abhorre the sight of those Weapons by which their Friends were Murdered. For since every Believer must needs know that he hath no otherwise any Title to Pardon, than as he is purified by the Blood of Christ, Heb. 9. *without the shedding of which there would have been no Remission*: hence he dares not, nay he cannot goe on to live in Sinne, because by so doing, he shall adde New Wounds, New Sorrowes, New Marks of Dishonour to *Christ*, *by whose Stripes alone* he must expect *to be healed*. Adde to this, that the *Spirit of God*, which, by quickning the *Immortall Seed of the Word*, begets Faith, Psal. 51. *is a clean Spirit*, and will not suffer Sinne to cohabit with it self, but Mortifies, Subdues and Quels it, according to that of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 9. *Ye are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit*, i.e. Ye walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, *if so be the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you*: and again, vers. 10. *If Christ*, i.e. his Spirit, *be in you, the Body is dead, by reason of Sinne*, i.e. it dies to sinne: And, vers. 13. *if by the Spirit ye mortifie the deeds of the Flesh, ye shall live*: All which places imply, that it is the Spirits proper business to *Mortifie Sinne*, there is no True Life without it. So that put all this together; Since 1. Gods pardoning Sinne for the sake of Christ, is the highest expression of Love imaginable; as the Apostle *John* cries out, 1. Joh. 4. 10. *Herein is Love*; i.e. *Love* to an Hyperbole, Love beyond any degree of comparison, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Sonne to be the Propitiation of our Sinnes.* 2. Since this expression of Love on Gods part, cannot

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be embraced by Faith on ours, but it must needs beget Love again; as the Sun-beams cannot fix themselves directly upon the Earth, but they will conveigh Warmth and Heat together with themselves. 3. Since whereever Love is engendred, it is always Active, carrying out the Soul with unquiet longings after Union with, and that can be compassed, of Likeness to the Object it loves. As the Earth no sooner conceives Heat, by the Action of the Sunne, but presently returns and reflects it back again. Lastly, Since the Spirit of God, which dwells in a Believer, is alwayes actuating and blowing up this drove, and improving the strength of it, especially in the subduing of Sinne, upon this consideration, because Sinne is contrary to the Nature of God, and to the Merit of Christ; from hence it demonstrably follows, that the best way to Mortifie Sinne, is rightly to conceive of the Freeness of Gods Grace in pardoning it.

This may serve to show us the True Nature of *Justifying Faith:* To think, as perhaps some careless men doe, that Faith is nothing else but a Confident Perswasion, that our Sinnes are pardoned for the sake of Christ, without any other notable Effect upon us; this is, at the best, an Ungrounded Fancy, which will in the end deceive us. From what I have said, it may appear, that True Justifying Faith carries along with it these two Inseperable Effects; *Vs.*

1. It pacifies the Conscience, it begets a Calm within. When a Sinner first begins to be troubled for Sinne, there must needs be a kind of Earthquake and Tempest in the Soul; as God saith of the wicked, that he hath *no Peace, but he is like a troubled Sea, which cannot rest.* A wicked man is not more Eager and Impatient to commit Sinne, than he is troubled and disquieted after it, for whenever Isa 57.19.

he cools, and can be at leasure to consider what he hath done, he can propose nothing to himself but matter of Anguish and Vexation; without, there is the Law complaining, and God sentencing; within, Conscience accusing, and Sinne condemning. In this Tumult and Hurly of Thoughts, if there be but dropped into any, so much strength of Faith, as to lay fast hold upon Gods generall Pardon, (like *Esther* catching at the *Golden Scepter*, when it was stretched out to her) presently the storm is laid, and a marvellous calm ensues. As the Apostle hath it, Rom.5.1. *Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* I doe not speak this, as if I thought that Faith did exclude all manner of *Doubting*; but that it doth expell Distraction. For to doubt is so much consistent with Faith, that I take it for granted, there never was, nor ordinarily can be, any True Faith without it. As at the Creation, Night did precede Day; so in Conversion, Darkness and Ignorance did precede the Enlightnings of Faith; and Doubting, like a Mist, doth still attend it, because our Faith, like our Knowledge, in this life, neither is nor can be perfect, for then it would no longer be Faith but Fruition. Yet this Doubting, which, like an Allay, God suffers to be mixed with the strong Wine of Faith, need not at all disturb our Peace of Conscience, but rather is left, as the *Canaanites* were, Jude 2. to teach *Israel* to warre, to quicken our endeavours, and to make us diligent in the use of those means, whereby we may be yet more confirmed and setled.

3. True Faith, as it Pacifies the Conscience, so it Purifies the Heart; as the Apostle *Peter* speaks, that *God* Acts 15.9. *did put no difference* between the Jews and Gentiles, because he *purified their Hearts by Faith*. Which is so inseparable an Effect of True Faith, that though *Justification*

be not *Sanctification*, yet it is never without it; and therefore they are sometimes put one for the other, as *he that is just, δικαιοσυνην, let him be justified still*. i.e. let him goe on to be more Holy. And to the *Corinthians*— *Ye are washed, ye are Sanctified, ye are Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* So—*By his mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs.* Where Holiness, which is an Effect and Fruit of Justification, is made to precede it, onely to show the Fixed and never-failing union betwixt them. Now *Faith* produceth Holiness, not onely because it is begot by the Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of Purity; but because it entitles us to all the Promises, which are alwayes urged as Motives unto Purity. *Ye are clean*, saith our Saviour to his Disciples, *through the Word* i.e. of Comfort, *which I have spoken to you*: and the Apostle having alleaged the Promise of God, wherein he said, *he would walk and dwell in his People*; from thence he inferres, *having therefore these Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit.* So *Peter*, *God hath given to us many Rich and Precious Promises, that thereby we might be partakers of a divine Nature*, having escaped, or *fled from that corruption which is in the world through Lust.* And *John* telling us that hereafter we should be like to Christ, because *we should see him as he is*, i.e. in his utmost radiance and lustre of Glory, *He then*, saith he, *that hath this Hope, purifies himself as he is Pure.* A right Believer enters into Heaven with Christ, and labours to live as a Citizen, not of that world he is in, but of that to which he belongs; and prepares himself for the Reception of Glory, by cleansing his

Rev.22.11.

1 Cor.6.11.

Tit.3 5,7.

Joh 15.3.

2 Cor.7 1.

2 Pet.1.4.

1 Joh.3.3.

Jac. 2. his Soul with the Infusions of Grace. Let every one then, who would pass for a Believer, follow the Apostle *James* Advice, and try his *Faith by his Works*; for as Water savours of the Vessell, so all our Actions have a Tincture and Relish from Faith; if that once be True and Sincere, it influences all we doe; and he that indeed believes in Christ, lives onely in and to him. But if our Faith be False and Counterfeit, then we have crooked Ends, we presently vary our Walking according to the worlds Compass, and lye at catch for such Gales to drive us, as are blown upon us by Popular Applause. In short, like the Church of *Sardis*, *we have a name to live, but indeed are dead.* So that where we see one Unholy in his Life, we need not to dispute, but he is an Unbeliever in his Heart, and all the while he is so, he ought to conclude himself Unjustified. And so much for the Second Point.

Rev. 3. 1.

Doct. 3. The third and last Point, in the generall Observation was this; That *a Believer must not think he hath arrived unto the Truth of his Profession, untill he is Dead to Sinne.* What it is *to be Dead to Sinne*, the Apostle explains afterwards, when he calls it *a crucifying of the old man together with Christ, that the Body of Sinne may be abolished*; and in another place, *a Mortifying of our Earthly members*: the importance of which Phrases amounts to this; that a Believer must keep no truce with, nor give any Quarter to Sinne; he must not onely not hearken to its Motions, but strangle them in the Birth; and labour to bring himself unto that Temper, that he may have as little appetite to Sinne, as a Dead man to doe any Action of Life. And the Reasons are,

vers. 6.

Col 3. 6.

Reason 1. First, Because there is to be a conformity between Christ,

Christ, and a true Christian; As all the parts of our Saviours life, are written for our Example, so his Death too ought to be Ours, in Resemblance and Imitation; we must, in the Apostle *Pauls* language, *be planted together into the likeness of his Death*, and that is by *crucifying our Old man*, i. e. by gibbeting those Lusts, which are the shame and Ignominy of our Nature; *Paul* therefore tells us, that he laboured for nothing more, than to attain *unto a Fellowship in Christs sufferings, being made conformable to his Death*: which consists not onely in suffering for him, but in dying with him, in that Part, which is onely our Clogge and Hindrance; and, as a Mudwall keeps off the light of the Sunne, so doth this *Flesh* onely stoppe the Entrance, and hinder the actings of a Spirituall Life: Therefore the Apostle, drawing a Parallel between Christ and a Believer, enforceth it thus; *As Christ died and rose again, so reckon ye your selves to be dead indeed to Sinne, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* So that the Death of Sinne, is the Life of the Soul; and therein a fit resemblance of a Risen Saviour.

Rom. 6. 5.

Phil. 3. 10.

Rom. 6. 10.

Secondly, The Promise of a Crown, is onely made to Conquerours: *To him that overcometh, will I give to sit with me on my Throne*: Now to Conquer, is not to fight or skirmish a little, but to renew the combate, and pursue it, till we have got the Enemy within our Power: So our Duell with Sinne, should be *ad Internecionem*, to the utter ruine and extirpation of it: Since the Price is our Souls, which we have no way to save, but by killing this Adversary. The Apostle therefore exhorting the Hebrews to endure Afflictions, useth this as a Motive, *Ye have not as yet resisted unto blood, fighting against Sinne.* As if he had said, Ye have as yet done just no-

Reason 2. Rev. 3. 21.

Heb. 12. 4.

thing, for this Warfare against Sinne, is never to be ended, but with the Death and Destruction of one of the Combatants.

Reason 3. Rom. 7. 20. Lastly, When we have done all, *Sinne* will still be in us. So the Apostle *Paul* found, when he complains, that *it is no longer I which doe these things, but Sinne which dwelleth in me*: And then presently cries out in great passion, like a man half distracted, *who shall deliver me from this Body of Sinne and of Death?* meaning thereby those Reliques of Originall Corruption, which like a Fatall Poison, will not in this life be so totally emptied out of the Soul, but still some drops will remain behind, to embitter our Lives, and to exercise our Graces. The most we can doe, will be to disarm this Enemy, for we cannot destroy him, to pull him from the Throne, since we cannot cast him out of the House. For it alwayes lies within, like Leaven, spreading its infection; or like Fire, if not watched, enflaming our whole man, being it self first *enflamed of Hell*. Sinne may lye quiet in the Soul, like sparks raked up in Ashes, which, upon the Addition of new Fuell, onely rageth the more. *There is* Job 14. 7. *saith Job, Hope of a Tree, when it is cut down, yet if the Root abide in the Earth, by the Sent of Water it may flourish and spring afresh*; so there is fear of Sinne, because the *root of the matter* abides in us, and is alwayes restless and important in its Actings. As a Cloud, however Thin and Empty at first, yet if there be a rough Wind to scatter it, it soon overspreads the whole Face of Heaven; so Sinne in the Soul, hath alwayes a Furious and Eager Spirit to blow it up, which should make us carefull to throw out this evil *Ferment*, least it should sowr the whole Mass, and by its corrupt quality, infect whatever it mixeth with.

This

This may serve to rectifie their mistakes, who think it a very facile and easie matter to be a Christian. Were there indeed no more required, then to keep *modum petendi*, to regulate our *evile Actions*, and to preserve a meane in sinning, this would not at all be hard; such a measure is attainable by meer Morality. The Heathen, whose Lives we read of, had many of them this degree in great Perfection; whose best virtues were onely *vitia temperata, well mingled and Allayed Vices*. Their light, how glorious and great soever it seems, was nothing else but Coloured Darkness; and their best Heats, onely rebated cold, sufficient to satisfie the world, and to get Applause with Men; but as for Inward Purity, and Heart-Mortification, that was a thing they never dreamt of; this was a task reserved for our Saviours followers. He hath not minced the matter, when he tells us, that *the way to Heaven is a Streight and* πλεγμένη ὁδός, i.e. *a squeezed, pressed* and *Narrowed way*; so pent up, and very straight, that no Wind of Ambition, no Tumour of Pride, no running Sore of Lust will enter there; he tells us plainly, that we may take our choice, either *cut off our Hands*, i.e. abridg our selves of our most Usefull and Profitable Sinnes, or else *into Hell fire*; it will certainly be very dreadfull to endure the one, and it must needs be painfull to doe the other. Hence *Fear* and *Trembling*. *Watchfulness* and *Solicitude* are so often called for; we must be alwayes upon our Guard, because ever in a fighting posture, which is a very uneasie service. And these being the Termes, upon which we are to follow Christ; it is very sad to consider, what a Liberty, both in Life and Language, even Professors of Religion doe take, as if they had a mind to try, how neer they could come to Sinne, without actuall Sinning. We use to be afraid of the

Use.

Mat. 7.

shadow of a Lion; and in a bodily distemper, none willingly would venture upon a little Poison, least by accident it should prove Mortall. Why we should not be as carefull to avoid those Sinnes, which none but fools count Little, is a Question we cannot assoil, if we either value our Souls, or prize our Peace with God, with whom to break in little things, is great Presumption. It will be to no purpose to scape greater Corruption, if less may
Rom. 6. 14. be sufficient to damn us. One Chain ties the Slave as fast to his Oar, as if he had a thousand; so doth one Lust bind up the Sinner unto Satans service; since all the while it reigns, it proclaims that Sinne is our Master.

Use 2. To exhort all *Believers* to set upon this Duty; as for others, they have no skill in it; it is a peculiar Task for such, as have the *Life of Faith*, and this they ought so much the more earnestly be excited to, in that, all the while they allow themselves in any one Sinne, they are
1 Joh. 1. 7. *Estranged from the Life of God*; if we expect to have fellowship with him, *we must walk in the Light, as he is in the Light:* As Darkness is nothing else but the Absence of the Sunnes Light; so Sinne, which the Apostle calls *Spirituall Darkness*, is nothing else but the Absence of the *Light of Gods Countenance*, which while it shines upon the soul, it preserves it not only from Discomfort, but likewise from Dangerous stumblings. It is indeed very possible, for a True Believer, through heedlesness and inadvertency, to fall into some Gross Sinnes, as *David*, *Hezekiah* and *Peter* did, but yet as while they lye in them, their condition seems little to differ from that of *Reprobates*; so when they begin to recover out of them, we may learn from the Practice of those forementioned Saints, that their Peace with God, and Assurance of his Favour is not recovered without great Expence of

Tears

Tears and Sorrow. Every Sinne therefore is to be *mortified*, if for no other respect, yet for this, in that any one allowed and countenanced in the Soul, will cast a cloud upon all our Graces, and hinder us for the time from discerning the Truth and Sincerity of any. As we therefore prize our own Peace, and Sense of Communion with God, so must we bestirre our selves, to keep every Corruption from breaking out and prevailing. For the effecting of which, the observing of those Rules will be very necessary.

1. Distinguish carefully between the *Naturall* and the *Sinfull* Desires of the Soul. There are some Desires, *viz.* of *Food*, of *Rest*, of *Raiment*, &c. which as they are *Naturall*, so they are *Innocent* too; Our Saviour himself was not without them, the Apostle saith, *He was tempted in all things as we are*, i.e. with *Hunger*, with *Cold* and *Nakednes*, *yet without Sinne*. The Body, as it is a creature of God, is good and must be provided for; and therefore the *Mortification of the Body*, consists not, in denying it the Necessaries of Life, but in Abridging it of its Irregular and Sensuall Appetites. *Having Food and Raiment*, saith the Apostle, *let us be therewith content*: from whence it follows, that either through *Want*, to be Destitute; or through *Will*, to deprive our selves of *Food* and *Raiment*, is our *Misery*, and not our *Mortification*. *They that are in the Flesh cannot please God*: The meaning is not, they that are in the *Body*, cannot please God; for so it is our duty to please him; but, they that walk in the Vanity and Sensuality of their Fleshly Mind, cannot please God: Such as commit those Actions that the Apostle hath branded with the Name of *Works of the Flesh*; as, *Adultery*, *Fornication*, *Uncleanness*, *Drunken-*

Heb. 4. 15.

1 Tim. 6. 8.

Rom. 8. 8.

Gal. 5. 22.

ness, &c. these cannot please God, because they walk in Wayes directly contrary to the Holiness and Spirituality of his Commands. But where the Appetite is hedged in and bounded within those limits, that God hath appointed, there *to eat Eating and Drinking*, as our Saviour did, may more redound *to the Glory of God*, in our thankfull Using of his Bounty, than any Forced and uncommanded Abstinence. So that all those Wayes of *Mortification*, which are now prescribed in the *Church of Rome*, and too much doted on by men that love to be talked on for their *Sanctity*, are but the Old, Needless and Sinfull Methods of the Pharisees, revived with greater Rigour and Austerity; which consist, as the Apostle hath it, Col. 2. 23. ἐν ἀφειδίᾳ σώματος, in *Unmercifullness to, and not sparing of, the Body*; and seem to have a Face of Wisdome and True Holiness, but indeed are meer Folly; as neither reaching to (pull out the Core of Sinne, which lies within; nor being able to keep the practisers of them from Exchanging a Carnall Lust for Spirituall Pride: and so instead of right subduing the Body, they onely swell and puff up the Soul.

2. Pray for the Spirit of Christ; without which we shall be too Weak to set upon and conquer this In-bred Enemy. *Whatever is born of the Flesh, is Flesh*, i. e. both Prail and Sinfull: and *Flesh* will never be able to subdue *Flesh*; the Spirit, which alwayes acts in Believers, must Rom. 8. 13. be set awork about it. *If by the Spirit, ye mortifie the deeds of the Flesh*, saith the Apostle, *ye shall live*, i. e. ye shall live indeed, for *it is this Spirit alone that quickens*. And whoever thinks of mortifying his Corruptions, without this supernaturall Assistance, begins a Combate wherein he is sure to be foiled; since not onely his own Nature;

Nature, but likewise the *Powers of Hell* are violently bent against him; and how shall he scape the *Malice* and *Wickedness* of those *Evill spirits*; unless the *Spirit of God*, which will alwayes reside where his presence is sollicited, doth secure the soul and give us strength for the Victory.

Lastly, Labour for the Assurance of the Pardon of your Past Sinnes: As he that runnes a Race, must first put off his Fetters; so whoever engages against the Violence of his Lusts, must first be satisfied, that his past offences are forgiven; or else the sense of Sinne unpardoned will lye, like a Weight upon him, and instead of exciting him to strive against it, betray him to its Assaults.

For the Attaining of this, besides what the Spirit of God may immediately work, (which case falls not under any Rule, since the *Spirit blowes where and when it pleaseth*) there is no Method can be given better, than that which I have hitherto been insisting on, and that is to cast our selves upon Gods Free-Grace in Christ; which who so doth, is as certain never to miscarry, as the Word of God, and the Experience of all the Saints now Triumphing in Heaven, can make him.

FINIS.